



Michigan *Office of the Auditor General* **REPORT SUMMARY**

Performance Audit

Employee Safety and Health Programs

Report Number:
63-703-98

Released:
April 2003

The Safety and Health Policy of the State of Michigan is to administer its activities to achieve and maintain protection for its employees, property, and those for whom it has a responsibility, thus ensuring efficient utilization of resources, minimizing liability, and advancing the public service. The policy requires each department to develop, implement, and administer a safety and health program with Statewide coordination.

Audit Objectives:

1. To assess the effectiveness of the State's employee safety and health programs in reducing the number and severity of work-related illnesses and injuries.
2. To assess the effectiveness of the State's employee safety and health programs in improving the productivity and effectiveness of the work force.

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Audit Conclusions:

1. We concluded that, although the State's employee safety and health programs are generally effective in reducing the number and severity of work-related illnesses and injuries, opportunities for improvement exist.
2. All the programs provided have the potential for improving the productivity and effectiveness of the work force. However, because

essentially no outcome data has been collected for these programs, we could not determine the extent to which they have affected the work force's productivity and effectiveness.

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Noteworthy Accomplishments:

The Department of Management and Budget (DMB) has developed a model state safety program, which is gradually being introduced Statewide. DMB has also developed a program of transitional employment for disabled employees and departmental and interdepartmental placement programs for ill and injured employees. The Department of Corrections provides a wide variety of safety and fitness-related programs to its employees. The Department of Community Health has trained staff at its facilities in methods of assessing, preventing, and physically managing violent or dangerous behavior.

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Reportable Conditions:

1. The DMB Office of the State Employer's (OSE's) Employee Health Management Division (the State's coordinating unit) had not assessed the employee safety and health programs implemented by the various State departments and agencies to identify those practices that help to reduce illnesses and injuries in order to incorporate these practices at other State departments and agencies. For example, at the Kalamazoo Regional Psychiatric Hospital, management informed us that the cost of replacing staff injured as a result of patient aggression dropped from approximately \$478,000 in 1990, when all staff completed training, to approximately \$92,000 in 1996.

DMB stated that the Division will comply with this recommendation by September 30, 2003.

2. OSE had not fully developed a performance assessment methodology by which OSE management could assess the effectiveness of its programs to improve the productivity and effectiveness of the State's work force through improving health and health awareness.

DMB stated that it will comply by deferring this recommendation to the Department of Civil Service for its consideration. Executive Order No. 2002-13 transferred the State employee benefits program to the Department of Civil Service from OSE.

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